



Tupelo, home to 36,000 people in northeast, MS, is best known as the birthplace of Elvis Aaron Presley (1935-1977). But it's also home to lawn care pro **Harry Collins** who, decked out in colorful costume, also entertained audiences for years while serving as the auctioneer to raise funds during annual Green Industry Conferences. Today, Collins and his talented team are "peacocking" — proudly showing off their work and hot pink rides.

How long have you been in the lawn care business, and how did you get started?

I have been in the lawn care business since 1989, when I went to work with my partner, Pete Poland, who has been in the landscaping business since 1982. I started as a construction manager and shortly after started our lawn maintenance division.

Describe the state of the economy in and around Tupelo, MS. Our economy has suffered like most of the rest of the country; however, we simply refuse to let it affect us. We are the premier landscape design, installation and maintenance provider in our area, and we continue to strive to do high-quality work at competitive prices.

Has the construction of the Toyota manufacturing plant (the car maker's 11th in the United States) had any effect on your local economy?

The Toyota plant is under construction and estimated to open in 2011. We have been doing work for several

suppliers who already are opening offices and look forward to the growth opportunities offered by Toyota. We feel Toyota will want a top-notch facility and we will, without a doubt, be the company to provide that level of service.

What steps have you taken to keep your company busy and profitable during this economic downturn?

We took a hard look at budgeting, jobs, employees and processes, then tightened our bootstraps and kept doing what we have always done: "Focus on doing high-quality work and keeping our customers happy." We feel the rest will take care of itself.

What do you think customers appreciate most about your company? After serving this area for more than 20 years, our customers know they

can count on us. We are a full-service company with landscape architects, landscape contractors, turfgrass professionals, highly skilled employees and a certified arborist. Our people are trained well and have the knowledge to provide better services, which always boils down to higher-quality results. In the long run, our customers always win.

Your company uses pink service vehicles. Tell us what you feel that does for your company. Our customers know who we are, and everyone knows the guys in the pink trucks do the best job. We get a lot of jokes and attention from our trucks, especially when we are out of town. Without a doubt, pink trucks help people identify us, but it's our 20 years of hard work that makes them count on us.

AT A GLANCE

COMPANY: Landscape Services, Inc.'s Total Lawn Care, Tupelo, MS

FOUNDED: 1982

PRINCIPALS: Pete Poland, Harry Collins, Chris Winders

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS: 1

EMPLOYEES: 25

SERVICES OFFERED: Landscape design, installation and maintenance

HOBBIES: "I love old tractors."

FAMILY: Wife Kay and three children: Patrick, Amelia (a certified arborist) and Tatum ("hardest-working part-time employee")

WEBSITE: PinkTrucks.com

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